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OLC 72-0647

25 May 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: White House Meeting on Handling of SALT Announcement

1. This afternoon Mr. Carl Duckett, DDS&T, and I attended a meeting in the Cabinet Room of the White House concerned with the handling of public affairs and congressional briefings in connection with a possible SALT agreement. The meeting was chaired by General Al Haig and participants included the following:

White House
Clark MacGregor
Chuck Colson
Dick Cook
Tom Korologos
John Lehman

State Department
Dave Abshire
Bob McCloskey
Marshall Wright
Charles Brower

Defense
Rady Johnson

Joint Chiefs
Colonel Paul Von Ins

ACDA
Spurgeon Keeny
Bill Hancock
Mr. Odean

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OMB
Bill Gifford

AEC
Jim Schlesinger

2. General Haig opened by saying it was still uncertain whether there would be a SALT agreement and hence the problem remained extremely sensitive.

3. He then outlined a series of steps in which most of the agencies present should participate in connection with press and congressional briefings following an announcement of an agreement. It was emphasized that there should be no such briefings prior to the President's return and all such briefings should be carefully coordinated with the White House.

4. It was agreed that "friends of the Administration in Congress" should be supplied with "yak themes" for use in responding to initial inquiries regarding the agreement, once it has been announced. If the agreement is reached on schedule, transcripts of press briefings given in Moscow will be promptly made available to appropriate agencies in Washington for inclusion in material to be handed out to their respective "constituencies," i. e., influential officials and individuals with whom they have close relations.

5. Clark MacGregor instructed that all contacts with the Congress regarding a SALT agreement be coordinated with his office and that there be no congressional briefings on the subject prior to Tuesday, 30 May. He called on State, Defense, and ACDA to make "target lists" of congressional members who should be approached on a priority basis beginning 30 May. He said the President planned to call together the congressional leadership promptly upon his return, probably about 2 June.

6. It was noted that the treaty on ABM would require Senate ratification and that a joint resolution approving the Executive agreements on other weapons systems was desired. It was also noted that a House resolution approving an ABM treaty would be helpful "window dressing."

7. State and ACDA will provide MacGregor with plans for approaching the Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees regarding the above-mentioned treaties and resolutions.

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8. MacGregor urged that in briefing members of Congress emphasis should be given to the argument that the agreement had been possible only because of the firm posture of the Administration and the cooperation of its supporters in Congress (i.e., Jackson, Goldwater, etc.). However, considerable difficulty was expected in pacifying these members.

9. No tasks or responsibilities of any kind were assigned to CIA during the discussion.

10. The same group will meet again tomorrow, 26 May, in the Cabinet Room at 11:30 a.m.

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JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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